

Message Text

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42

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 IO-14 EUR-25 AF-10 SSC-01

DRC-01 OMB-01 AID-20 /149 W

----- 013244

O R 251520Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 471

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

US MISSION USUN 2695

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E.O. 11652: N/A DECON 9-25-75

TAGS: PGOV PINT LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE CABINET RESIGNS

REF: BEIRUT 11518

1. FOLLOWING COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING AT PRESIDENTIAL PALACE
SEPT. 25, PRIMIN TAKIEDDINE SOLH AT 1650 HOURS LOCAL TENDERED HIS
RESIGNATION AND THAT OF HIS CABINET TO PRES. FRANGIE. WE UNDER-
STAND THAT PRESIDENT ACKNOWLEDGED RECEIPT OF RESIGNATIONS, BUT
REQUESTED SOLH AND HIS SURVIVING MINISTERS TO REMAIN IN OFFICE AND
ACT AS CARETAKER GOVT. UNTIL NEW ONE CAN BE FORMED. WE ARE TOLD
THAT WHEN PRESIDENTIAL DECREE ANNOUNCING FORMATION OF NEW GOVT.
IS ISSUED, RESIGNATION OF SOLH CABINET WILL AUTOMATICALLY TAKE
EFFECT.

2. FEVERISH ACTIVITY AMONG LOCAL POLITICAL LEADERS (REFTEL AND
PREVIOUS) IN CONNECTION WITH SELECTION OF SUCCESSOR CABINET

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CONTINUES, WITH FORMER PREMIER ABDULLAH YAFI AND RASHID KARAME

BEING TOUTED BY MOST OBSERVERS AS HAVING THEEDGE ON OTHER SUNNI MOSLEM CANDIDATES AT THIS JUNCTURE. (COMMENT: WE REGARD SUCH SPECULATION AS PREMATURE, SINCE WE CONTINUE BELIEVE PROCESS OF CHOOSING NEW PRIMIN AND FORMING HIS CABINET WILL REQUIRE MANY DAYS, IF NOT WEEKS, OF "GIVE-AND-TAKE" MANEUVERINGS BETWEEN FRANGIE AND BROAD SPECTRUM OF LEBANESE POLITICAL FIGURES.)

3. KARAME, HIS ERSTWHILE SUNNI RIVAL (AND ALSO FORMER PREMIER) SAEB SALAM, AS WELL AS YAFI AND "NATIONAL BLOC" CHIEFTAIN RAYMOND EDDE, MET JOINTLY HERE SEPT. 24 AND REPORTEDLY AGREED ON "ACTION PROGRAM" CALLING FOR FORMATION OF NEW CABINET UNDER "STRONG" PRIMIN CAPABLE OF INSTITUTING LONG OVERDUE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS, ADOPTING CLEAR-CUT NATIONAL DEFENSE POLICY, AND "RE-ESTABLISHING CONFESSİONAL BALANCE" IN VARIOUS GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS. AT SAME TIME, KAMAL JUMBLATT APPEARS TO HAVE SERVED FORMAL NOTICE ON PRES. FRANGIE THAT HIS BLOC'S SUPPORT FOR, AND PARTICIPATION IN, AN NEW GOVT. WILL ALSO DEPEND ON CERTAIN "CONDITIONS", INCLUDING PROOMISE OF CONSTITUTIONAL AND ELECTORAL REFORMS DESIGNED TO REDUCE INFLUENCE OF "CONFESSİONALISM" IN LEBANESE BODY POLITIC. (IN VIEW FACT THAT SEPT. 22 TARSHISH INCIDENT--SEE PARA 3 REFTEL--HAS FURTHER ENVENOMED JUMBLATT'S POOR RELATIONS WITH RIGHT-WING CHRISTIAN LEADERS PIERRE GEMAYEL AND CAMILLE CHAMOUN, HE WILL PROBABLY ALSO SEEK TO EXERCISE VETO OVER FALANGIST AND CHAMOUNISH REPRESENTATION IN ANY NEW CABINET.)

4. PRES. FRANGIE'S REACTION TO ABOVE DEMANDS REMAINS A MYSTERY, SINCE HE IS RUNNING TRUE TO FORM IN KEEPING HIS THOUGHTS A SECRET EVEN FROM HIS CLOSEST ADVISERS. ONLY INDICATION OF PRESIDENT'S ATTITUDE TO DATE IS WIDELY-CIRCULATED RUMOR THAT HE IS INTENT UPON HAVING HIS SON, PTT MINISTER TONY FRANGIE, RETAINED IN NEXT CABINET.

5. AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED FOREGOING YESTERDAY WITH SAEB SALAM WHO STATED CRISIS MIGHT BE PROTRACTED. WHILE STATING HE "ALWAYS PREPARED SERVE COUNTRY" HE DISCOUNTED THIS POSSIBILITY NOW FOR HE COULD "WORK WITH PRESIDENT" ONLY IF TONY FRANGIE AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GENERAL GHANEM WERE TOTALLY REMOVED FROM THE SCENE, OBVIOUSLY A MOST UNLIKELY EVENT.
GODLEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, PERSONNEL RESIGNATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 SEP 1974
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BEIRUT11654
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740270-0327
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740917/aaaaanqy.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: BEIRUT 11518
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUL 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <11 MAR 2003 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEBANESE CABINET RESIGNS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, LE, (SOLH, TAKIEDDINE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005